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ter exceeds that of the sustaining branch, which being overweighted, can no longer support the parasite except in a pendent position.—A. H. CURTISS, *Jacksonville, Florida*.

A CONVENIENT MICROSCOPE.—I have been so frequently consulted of late as to the best form of dissecting microscope for botanical purposes, that I am glad to be able to say our well-known Optician, Mr. Joseph Zentmeyer, of Philadelphia, has just constructed one that in all respects is what the analytical botanist requires. Mr. Zentmeyer needs no word of mine to commend his work. It is in the interest of botany that I write this.

The stand is round, of cast iron, and six inches in diameter. Hence the instrument is perfectly steady. The pillar supporting the stage is strong, of brass, and three inches high. Of just such a height that the hands holding the needles are free from tremor because the arms rest solidly on the table. The stage of brass is five inches long by nearly four wide, and *stationary*, thus contrasting most favorably with the old Raspail, and some of the later instruments. There is a glass plate nearly two inches in diameter in the middle of the stage, and abundant light is thrown on this from the mirror beneath. The arm carrying the lens is raised or lowered by a firm, and charmingly smooth working rack and pinion, which has a free lateral movement. A good lens magnifying about ten diameters completes this model instrument. Its advantages are: strength, neatness and a large steady stage, over all the cheaper instruments of this class, and it has all the good points of the finer dissecting microscopes at about half the cost. The glass plate in the stage may be removed and a watch glass put in, to contain any object we wish to examine in water, or an alcohol lamp placed under the stage will keep up the gentle heat we sometimes want in work.

The instrument as I have described it with a neat box, costs only fifteen dollars, and one dollar more would add an extra, higher-powered lens, thus making it equal to any work involved in analytical botany. Beside this, a tube might be added to screw into the arm carrying the lens, and thus at a very small additional expense the owner would have a compact, strong compound microscope that would do good field work with even a quarter or a fifth of an inch objective. For the botanical laboratories of Colleges it has no superior, when we consider economy and durability.—J. T. ROTH-ROCK.

MONOTROPA UNIFLORA.—Notwithstanding the pretty general distribution of this peculiar type of vegetation, its comparative numerical paucity in any region appears as rather a striking feature. In many hundreds of botanical walks we have found but one locality where this plant seems anyways abundant. This was in what is known as the "Beech and Oak Flats" of Jefferson county, Indiana. The timber is often quite dense, and the vegetable debris has often formed to quite a thickness by natural accumulation from year to year, and at the same time being aided by the presence of water except in the driest seasons. Under such circumstances vegetable products of a fungus type are readily encouraged in growth. Here within the compass of a few square yards, and among the beech roots, we have secured as many as 50 fine specimens. However, in contemplating their beauty of form and delicacy of structure, we did not suspicion such a poisonous principle to lurk within as we have since found to be the case.

During the month of September a young lady brought me a plant which she said had poisoned her, and she desired its name. With some surprise, and perhaps I should have had none after considering its fostering food and close resemblance to the Fungi, I found the plant to be *Monotropa uniflora*. The circumstances of the case are as follows. The young lady while examining the plant accidentally crushed the stem, and some of the juice was driven upon her lips. The mucous portions which were somewhat chapped became very much irritated, and began to inflame and swell consider-